The First Twenty-five Years—*Joseph Wood Krutch*

THE Nation

October 22, 1949

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THE Nation

AMERICA'S LEADING LIBERAL WEEKLY SINCE 1865

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The Shape of Things

PRIME MINISTER ATTLEE HAS PUNCTURED A swollen bubble of speculation by his statement that there will be no general election this year. This means that before asking for a new mandate the Labor government intends to complete its two most important pieces of unfinished business—nationalization of the steel industry and limitation of the powers of the House of Lords. It will then be able to claim it has carried out every major item in the program it put before the country in 1945. How far this unique record in British politics will serve to win it a new majority it is hard to say, but the solid popularity of much that Labor has accomplished is attested by the eager "me-too" attitude of Tory spokesmen on such matters as the free medical service. When the election does take place next year, the issue will turn partly on the economic state of the nation at that time. Attlee's decision suggests some confidence that the position will not get worse and may get better. On the other hand, the Tories insist that without a drastic program for curbing expenditure, which would itself be unpopular, the economic situation must continue to deteriorate. Their disappointment at the Prime Minister's announcement, however, unless it is feigned, suggests doubts about whether their own electoral prospects will ripen with time. Perhaps the Tories fear enlargement of the rifts in their own ranks revealed during their annual party conference last week. Lord Beaverbrook's manifesto calling for Commonwealth free trade might stir the hearts of diehard imperialists, but he raised an issue which Tory leaders, remembering the grief it has caused the party in the past, would like to pigeonhole. Nor are they any happier about his Lordship's proposed sop to the masses—a minimum wage of £6 a week—which is hardly consistent with demand for measures to check inflation.

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NORWAY'S ELECTION DISAPPOINTED THOSE commentators on both right and left who have recently been talking of European social democracy as a spent force. After four years of office with a precarious parliamentary majority of one, the Norwegian Labor Party has returned to power with at least 86 of the 150 seats in the Storting. Its gains seem to have been mainly at the expense of the Communists, once a considerable force in Norway, who kept but one of the eleven seats they captured in 1945. The four anti-Socialist parties maintained their position, but the uprising of the people against austerity and controls on which they had relied to sweep the Socialists out of office failed to materialize. "For the Norwegian people," the *Wall Street Journal* comments sadly, "the planner's promises of security have great attractions even when they are tarnished by failures to deliver." Actually the Norwegian Labor government did not renege on its 1945 promises. It had offered no hopes of ease and plenty, for its members knew that after five years of Nazi occupation and destruction the country faced an extremely difficult situation. What it did promise was full employment and a fair distribution of scarce goods. These pledges it kept, while at the same time reconstruction measures were steadily pushed ahead. Production is now well above the pre-war level, and the merchant fleet, Norway's most important economic asset, has been restored. Evidently a large number of the voters feel that the Labor Party has performed reasonably well and are willing to intrust it with responsibility for the next stages of recovery. Clearly there is also general support for Norway's adherence to the Atlantic Pact, opposition to which was the main Communist plank.

*

IT IS WITH PLEASURE THAT WE ADD OUR salute to the many already received by John Dewey from all over the world on the occasion of his ninetieth birthday. For Professor Dewey, as much as any living man or woman, has laid the foundation for a dwelling place for liberalism and rationalism. One of the birthday testimonials credits Dewey with freeing "more people from slavery than [did] the Emancipation Proclamation," and perhaps this is borne out by the direct and indirect results of Dewey's contributions to progressive education, if by nothing else. But there is much else. The "philosopher of the common man" has left his mark on almost every aspect of contemporary society and entered pragmatically—to use the word so inextricably associated with him—into many a dangerous fight, as, for example, the Sacco-Vanzetti case. Tributes such as that offered by Jerome Nathanson on page 392 are appropriate today; countless others will follow in the years to come.

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Business & Advertising Manager: Hugo Van Arx
Director of Nation Associates: Lillie Shultz

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WHETHER OR NOT JULES MOCH, THE FRENCH Premier designate, succeeds in forming a Cabinet—still in doubt as we go to press—or whether, if he does, it will be a new, broader coalition or simply a government of Socialists, is of secondary importance. The real significance of the current French crisis has been little discussed in the American press. Although it takes the form of a conventional political upset, the crisis is essentially social and economic, and will not be settled without a revolutionary change in the social and economic structure of the country. Behind all the political disputes and maneuvers is the demand of the workers and a large part of the middle class for higher salaries and lower prices. More revealing than any statement by the various political parties was the decision of the Catholic unions (Syndicats Chrétiennes), taken forty-four hours before the resignation of the Queuille Cabinet, to seek an agreement with the Communist-controlled C. G. T. for a joint fight on the issue of wages. The anti-Communist Force Ouvrière would without question join such a common front. M. Moch may succeed in forming a government which can stay in power several months, as his predecessor M. Queuille managed to stay a year. But the real crisis will continue until the social problems which beset France at the end of the war, and which have been evaded by one government after another, are faced squarely, with audacity and determination.

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STALIN CLEARLY HAD TO CHOOSE. TO GREET the new East German government with enthusiasm and to confer on it as many real powers as possible would be a good tactical move against the West. It would also, obviously, create a feeling of disgust and perhaps of fear among the other satellites at a time when mass arrests in Czechoslovakia and demonstration trials in Hungary testified to the spread of disaffection. Stalin chose to strike a blow in the cold war, assuming, perhaps correctly, that the Communist rulers of Germany's neighbor states, understanding the value of such a move, would take whatever measures were necessary to prevent any overt reaction on the part of the people. So the Communist-ruled East German regime was hailed as a "democratic peace-loving republic," and respectful reference was made to the fact that "the German and Soviet peoples made the largest sacrifice" in the last war. Finally, the Russian Premier declared that both peoples "have the largest potentialities in Europe to complete great actions of world significance." Just what joint actions of the Russians and Germans remain to be finished we are not told, except that Stalin calls for "the same determination to fight with the same intensity of effort for peace with which they waged war." Even Germans —in fact even German Communists—may find this new note of comradeship a little hard to credit, until they remember that the Eastern bloc is badly in need of re-

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inforcement, while the "enslaved people of western Germany" must be shown that their fellow-countrymen in the Soviet zone are on the high road to full sovereignty, with the unification of Germany as their ultimate goal. In terms of immediate strategy Stalin's move may pay off; in the longer run it is likely to cause more trouble than it is worth.

JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH ROUNDS OUT THIS fall his first twenty-five years as *The Nation's* drama critic. On another page of this issue he sets down in his highly civilized prose his own *apologia pro vita sua* as a constant and critical "worshiper" in that temple, the theater, which as he points out is one of the few places remaining in a divided world where human beings can still agree at least on one thing—that they are members of the human race. We offer our felicitations and affections to Mr. Krutch—and our congratulations upon a long and fruitful career not only as *The Nation's* drama critic but also as one of the nation's most distinguished men of letters.

The Welcome to Nehru

BY FREDA KIRCHWEY

THE welcome received by Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru has been a real welcome, a tribute to the man who led his people into independence, surmounted the bloody communal riots that threatened the very existence of the new state, and who today stands as the symbol of that national unity—above sect or class—for which Gandhi died. What Nehru has accomplished and, even more, what he represents have made him a figure of immense significance to the whole world and explain to a measurable degree the warmth of his reception in this country. But having said this, it is necessary to say more. For the honors heaped upon the distinguished Indian visitor by official America have a meaning only indirectly related to the man himself. They constituted a political pronouncement as well, a clear statement to the world that the United States regards India as an important element in its policy of containment toward Russia.

Possibly no actual talks were held or explicit promises given. The United States may not even have made up its mind how far it is prepared to go in taking over the responsibility and financial burden Britain can no longer carry in Asia. The State Department may be looking toward one sort of relationship with India; the Defense Department another. Not every military leader has given up hope of salvaging something out of the China débâcle; and a handful of diehard Congressmen are still determined to pour more money into the bottomless pockets of Chiang and his generals. But with all these views admittedly in existence and offsetting one another, the view now taking precedence, that lent the extra touch of solicitude and lavishness to the welcome accorded Nehru, is that India offers the best hope of holding back the tide of communism flowing south through Asia. What this country badly wants is a new Asian base and a reliable ally to take the place of the unreliable and incompetent Chinese Nationalists.

The desire is understandable. From the point of view of the cold war China is gone, and the lesser East Asia peoples, just struggling into nationhood, offer little in the way of a solid resistance. India, with a big and well-equipped army, a government animated by "Western" ideas of democracy, and some industrial capacity, is clearly the best hope of blocking Communist control over all Asia. The Nehru government has clamped down on the Communists at a dozen points inside India where misery and communal tension have created explosive situations. Given economic and technical help, India might, in the minds of Washington policy-planners, become a bulwark against the spread of Russian influence and a valuable strategic base in case of war.

India's economic difficulties are many. Its methods of agriculture are obsolete, its land run down. It needs new industries, and established industries need equipment and financing. Its housing situation is deplorable, and has been made worse by the 6,000,000 refugees who have poured into the country since partition. Unemployment is acute in some areas and occupations. Food is short. India needs wheat for the immediate relief of hunger; it needs reclamation and irrigation and power projects for the long run. And like the rest of the world it is short of dollars to buy the things it lacks, while devaluation has reduced its purchasing power still further.

Many of these needs the United States could make good; in fact, India might well be made a chief demonstration center for President Truman's Point Four. But to put this idea over in Congress and the Pentagon, it would be necessary to show that money and technical help put into India would pay dividends not only in political stability but in solid support of America in the cold war—or in a hot war if it should come. And no such proof is available.

If Mr. Acheson had the final word, a sensible policy toward India would probably be established, for many signs indicate that the Secretary of State understands the basic fact about Asia: it can be useful to the West only if it is permitted to be independent of the West, politically and in its economic development. India, in particular, must be allowed to put through a revolution in land tenure and land use—as the Communists are doing in China. The Indian government must be in

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a position to carry out its program of social reform, not as an economic satellite of the United States but as a sovereign power. And above all it must continue to be neutral and not be forced into the Western power structure; for once the government loses its freedom of action it becomes again a victim of Western imperialism and its present great influence among its own people and with the other peoples of Asia is gone.

Since no issues have been publicly raised during Mr. Nehru's visit, the Indian Prime Minister has been able to state his position with candor and apparent innocence. But the care with which his words have been chosen suggests that he is aware of the pressures behind the scenes. He has plainly said that India will not qualify its neutrality in the slightest degree. He considers the "psychology of blind fear" the greatest danger the world faces—a danger greater than the atomic bomb itself. He regards a defense pact among the non-Communist nations of Asia as "premature" and urges instead an effort to bring about closer cooperation among all the Asiatic countries. He insists that the national feeling of the Asiatic peoples be given a free rein: "When nationalism is suppressed in one area it affects the whole of Asia; all our suspicions are aroused when this is done." If American aid is offered India on terms it can agree to, it will be welcomed; but India can and will survive even without such help.

Nehru is something better than a nationalist or an anti-Communist. He is a passionate protagonist of the suffering, ill-used millions who make up the vast majority of his country's and of the world's population. He could hardly understand a "deal" by which the wheat the people of India need would be provided by America only in exchange for promises of political or military support. Nehru cannot be bought. And he can be won neither by honors nor by a generosity which is hedged about with conditions. It is to be hoped that this truth will penetrate to the depths of the official mind of America before any irrevocable mistakes are made.

POLITICS and PEOPLE

Marx in Foley Square

BY ROBERT BENDINER

Foley Square, New York, October 14

WE SHALL see, though not quickly, whether a far-flung political battle can be won in the courts of law. So much, at least, was established when a slight, youngish woman rose in Judge Medina's federal courtroom here and as foreman of the jury proclaimed in a tremulous voice the guilt of eleven leaders of the Communist Party. After the longest criminal trial in American legal history, nine months of alternating tedium and turbulence in which defense counsel well earned a total of forty citations for criminal contempt, the defendants stood convicted of a charge which until nine years ago no Congress had ever dared to place on the statute books—not even the frightened Congresses which passed the Sedition Act of 1798 and the Espionage Act of 1917.

To understand fully the nature of this historic conviction, it is necessary to refer briefly to three documents —the so-called Smith act, under which the indictment was brought, the indictment itself, and Judge Medina's long charge to the jury, cogent except in one all-important particular. The law itself, passed in 1940 primarily as an "Alien Registration Act," makes it incidentally unlawful for any person, alien or citizen, "to knowingly or wilfully advocate, abet, advise, or teach the duty, necessity, desirability, or propriety of overthrowing or destroying any government in the United States by force or violence." Applying this proscription to the defendants, the government charged in its indictment that they had conspired to violate the law by re-forming the Communist Party in 1945. Under the leadership of Earl Browder the party had been dissolved a year or so previously in a glow of good-will and the expressed belief that long-term collaboration between communism and capitalism was possible and desirable. On direct orders from Moscow relayed by the French Communist leader Duclos, contended United States Attorney John F. X. McGohey, the defendants reversed their line, threw Browder to the wolves, and organized the present Communist Party as "a society . . . who teach and advocate the overthrow of the government of the United States by force and violence," in contravention of the Smith act.

On the basis of some five million words of testimony from fifty witnesses, both defense and prosecution, more than 700 exhibits, including pamphlets and books distributed by the party and studied in its schools, and the interminable and sometimes eloquent arguments of defense counsel, the jury was evidently convinced that the defendants had in fact committed the act charged and that the government's characterization of the Communist Party was accurate. But in charging the jury Judge

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Medina wisely went beyond the mere question of fact. The defendants were to be acquitted, he said, unless the jury was "satisfied from the evidence beyond a reasonable doubt that the defendants had an intent to cause the overthrow or destruction of the government by force and violence." Not only must that motive have been present, but a conviction could be brought in only if the jury felt that the defendants intended "to achieve this goal . . . as speedily as circumstances would permit it to be achieved." Mere advocacy, the Judge said, was not enough. Specifically, "it is not the abstract doctrine of overthrowing or destroying organized government by unlawful means which is denounced by this law, but the teaching and advocacy of action for the accomplishment of that purpose, by language reasonably and ordinarily calculated to incite persons to such action."

Clearly this injunction made it harder to find against the defendants than the bare wording of the law or of the indictment, and it raises the nice question of whether a judge's charge may give constitutional substance to a law which in itself may be found lacking. But this was the closest the court came to instructing the jury in the classic criterion of "clear and present danger," and it did not seem to me to come very close. On the contrary, it was evident that the court took an extremely narrow view of what constitutes a danger. It is difficult to see how a party that is hardly more than half as strong now as it was fifteen years ago can suddenly be deemed to present anything like an imminent threat to the established order. It is hard to see how a party that appears to have lost its grip even in the trade-union movement, where it had recorded its only real successes, offers, in Judge Medina's words, "sufficient danger of a substantive evil . . . to justify the application of the statute under the First Amendment of the Constitution."

In this circumstance and in the very questionable legality of the Smith act itself, regardless of its application in this case, lie the chief prospects for a reversal by the higher courts. There are other possible grounds, too, of course, and it is not to be doubted that the defense will exploit them fully. The method of selecting federal juries in the Southern District of New York, a question pressed by defense lawyers for the first twenty-seven days of the trial, will certainly figure in the appeal. So will the allegedly prejudicial attitude of the judge and the scores of exceptions taken by counsel to rulings which they hope to prove reversible errors.

The legal process will be protracted and may drag on for as long as two years, during which time the party fully expects to do business as usual. Presumably if it was a criminal conspiracy to form the party for the purpose stated in the indictment, it is a criminal conspiracy to keep it going for the same purpose. But what can the government do? Judge Medina made it very plain that the Communist Party was not on trial and that the defendants were not being tried by reason of their membership. It would hardly be feasible to go through another nine months' nightmare to try their successors on the party's national board and fantastic to do so while the present case is being appealed. The court decision itself will therefore have no direct bearing on the operations of the Communists for a long while to come, a fact which would seem to indicate how little their party is really regarded as a clear and present danger.

BUT even an ultimate decision by the Supreme Court to uphold the conviction will not extract the government from the sticky web in which it has enmeshed itself. The problem of handling successive "politburos" would still remain to be solved. Certainly an interminable series of interminable trials, each dealing with the defendants as individuals, is out of the question. The fact is that in undertaking this ill-advised prosecution the Department of Justice pointed straight to the ultimate sanction of having the party outlawed by statutory action, a step which its own J. Edgar Hoover flatly opposes.

The FBI chief has good reason to look with a jaundiced eye on a course that will serve either to drive the party underground or enable it to live happily under an alias and a new set of by-laws. History is littered with the failures of this technique, as a reading of Zechariah Chafee's classic "Free Speech in the United States" abundantly demonstrates. When Bismarck engineered a law making membership in the Social Democratic Party a crime, "the party throve and prospered as never before." When the British dissolved the Irish Catholic Association early in the nineteenth century, its members started a new society every two weeks to accomplish the same ends, and when the ban was dropped they were as strong as ever. The most recent instance of this easy evasion was the emergence of the Labor Progressive Party of Canada, complete with Communist personnel, immediately after the outlawing of the Communist Party in that country. There is no reason to doubt that similar action here would be followed by the quick creation of a "Progressive Workers' Society" or a "Young Pioneers' Bicycle Club," in which William Z. Foster would by strange coincidence turn up as chairman.

But liberals have a reason more compelling than such practical considerations for hoping that the Supreme Court will undo the work of these nine fruitless months in Foley Square. The case of the Communist leaders offers a clear opportunity for the court to blot out a statute which does violence to the most basic concepts of Anglo-Saxon law, and which seriously threatens to undermine the guaranties of the First Amendment. It is true that the Communists would make political capital even of a reversal based on strictly constitutional grounds, but they would make even more political capital out of defeat, not only here but throughout the

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world. That is something the Justice Department should have taken into account before it embarked on a course that could in no way achieve its purpose. For the fact remains that the place to beat the Communists—and I am all for beating them—is in the political field, not in the courts; by social progress and by exposing them for what they are, the lackeys of a foreign power, and not by legal devices that endanger the liberties of all.

Justice Holmes put it simply: ". . . we should be eternally vigilant against attempts to check the expression of opinions that we loathe and believe to be fraught with death, unless they so imminently threaten interference with the . . . pressing purposes of the law that an immediate check is required to save the country." Had Judge Medina seen what Holmes so clearly saw, he would be recognized today as a great jurist, not merely as a harried judge who acted fairly within the narrow confines of a bad law.

Sweden: Successful Semi-Socialism

BY J. ALVAREZ DEL VAYO

LAST summer I went to Stockholm for the thirty-eighth conference of the Interparliamentary Union, at which, as M. P. for Madrid, I represented the Spanish Cortes. The trip gave me a welcome opportunity to observe conditions in Sweden. Walking around the city and visiting the surrounding countryside, I felt as if I were part of a fairy tale—in the midst of war-torn Europe this could not be real. With its prosperity and cheerfulness Sweden seemed like a poster proclaiming the advantages of keeping out of war attached to walls shaken by the mere existence of the atom bomb.

An elaborate program of festivities in honor of the delegates culminated in a performance of the famous old Italian *opéra bouffe*, "Secret Marriage," in the court theater of the royal palace at Drottningholm. The theater has been kept exactly as when it was built, and the performance was in the same classic style. Its archaic charm served to dramatize the brisk modernity of Sweden itself.

The first thing I did in my free time was to visit the new houses built by the city for working-class families, self-supporting women, and old people. A true New Deal has been promised and almost every item carried out. Housing, hospitals, factories provide evidence that a most interesting attempt is being made to build socialism by stages, to do what Sidney and Beatrice Webb advocated as long ago as when I was a student in London.

The great problem in Stockholm as in the rest of the world is housing. Circulars have been distributed throughout the country asking people not to come to Stockholm unless they have a place to live, but they continue to come. Thirty thousand apartments would have to be built to meet the present demand, and the building quota for the city is only 6,100 apartments a year. Of five new schools needed this year only one may be built. Two-thirds of the housing quota is being constructed by the municipality through a stock company of which the city owns all the shares. The city owns almost all the land built on and charges a leasehold fee for its use. It grants a corresponding subvention to apartment houses built on privately owned land in the period 1942-45 on condition that the tenants receive the benefit of the subvention. There are no actual slums in Stockholm.

In addition to housing, the city is constructing buildings of a modern, experimental type for specialized purposes—a children's village, for instance, for retarded and neurotic children. The projected subway is a difficult undertaking since it has to be cut through solid rock, but construction is in progress and furnishes considerable excitement for the people.

Two institutions which I visited made a strong impression on me—the Södersjukuset Hospital in Stockholm and the Marabou chocolate factory at Sunbyberg, a half-hour from the capital. I could not judge the medical rating of the hospital, but Dr. Negrín, who attended the Interparliamentary Conference as the other Spanish delegate, considers it one of the best hospitals he has seen anywhere, "not excepting the Medical Center in New York." Its social spirit was reflected for me in one of its regulations: the decision whether a patient shall be put in a private room or in a room for four persons is made by the doctor and does not depend on the patient's social position or on how much money he has. A patient costs the hospital about 35 kronor a day but he pays only 3.50—the city pays the rest.

The Marabou factory was so interesting that I want to write a separate article about it for *The Nation*. Here I will speak of only one small detail: to make the great garden where the workers rest and eat more aesthetically pleasing, the management has adorned it with modern statues, among them a Maillol brought expressly from France.

IN THIS atmosphere of democracy, with the majority of the people benefiting directly from social legislation, there is naturally strong support for the Socialist government and its policy of neutrality. In consequence

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Sweden makes an impression of great political stability and is seldom the subject of news or comment in the Western press—except, for instance, when it announces some striking decision such as its refusal to join the Atlantic Pact. One should not conclude, however, that all is harmonious in Swedish politics. With a year to wait, the anti-Socialist forces are already preparing for the hard fight they intend to put up at the municipal elections in September, 1950. They will center their campaign on the Stockholm city government, which has a long record of successful accomplishment and counts among its eight councilors, Socialists of the capacity of Z. Höglund, Hjälmar Mehr, and Helge Berglund.

The favorite target of the opposition is Höglund, who directs the city's finances. For me it was extraordinarily refreshing to find an Old Guard European Socialist like Höglund, in the tradition of Jaurès and the venerable Branting, basing his policy on a strong sense of present political realities. I rejoiced to find him in a responsible post in a Socialist administration when so many of the Socialist parties of Europe are in a state of ideological collapse and resigned to playing second fiddle in governments directed by the men of 1939 or by representatives of the Vatican.

Höglund is criticized chiefly for working with the Communist representation in the city government. As a matter of fact he has no choice, for the Socialists are not so strong in the municipal council as in the Riksdag, where they have an absolute majority. But aside from that, Höglund is not one of those Socialists who curry favor with the bourgeois parties by automatically taking an anti-Communist position. That he and his friends have good reasons for working with the Communists was made clear at the Socialist congress last year when the leaders unreservedly approved the policy of the party members in the city government.

In a Europe reoriented to fit the Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan, Socialist governments are being generally replaced by governments that subscribe to the American principle of free enterprise. Even in Sweden, therefore, the opposition believes that this is its chance to seize power. Its principal weapon is the press. The most powerful Swedish newspapers, the morning *Dagens Nyheter* and the evening *Expressen*, support the Liberal Party. When I was in Stockholm both papers were carrying on a ruthless campaign against Höglund and his administration of the city's finances. If the Socialists can be defeated in the coming municipal elections, a long step will have been taken toward defeating them in the general elections.

IN ADDITION to its record of domestic accomplishments the Socialist government can point to its foreign policy, which has been ably conducted by Foreign Minister Unden, now at Lake Success as head of the Swedish delegation. I knew Mr. Unden well in the League of Nations, where he always took an admirable position on Spain and on other issues of principle. In Stockholm I obtained an interview with him in which he elaborated the ideas he had expressed in the Interparliamentary Conference. They may be summarized as follows:

The ideal solution of the problem of security is no doubt a universal organization possessing the power to intervene rapidly and effectively against any aggressor. In an organization of this type no country would have the right to remain neutral. The solidarity of the members must be complete.

When the United Nations was organized, the great powers thought the time was not ripe for the establishment of such a league of states or world government. Who would say that they were wrong, that their decision was not based on a just appraisal of the international situation? At that time there was certainly no possibility of forming a more effective organization than the one defined by the Charter of the United Nations. Nor is the present hour more propitious. The United Nations exists. But as long as the international situation remains as it is, as long as relations between states are based on force rather than right, the United Nations will not be a collective-security organization in the strict sense of the word.

Under these conditions, various states, including the great powers, have found it necessary to bolster their security with military pacts. We have the pan-American pact, the Atlantic Pact, the system of treaties binding together the states of Eastern Europe. Alliances of this sort offer some advantages. Since a true universal organization to maintain peace has not been set up, regional pacts can contribute to a more equal balance of the world's military forces and can be considered stabilizing factors. But these alliances, crystallizing opposing groups of states, are at most only palliatives. They are not to be compared with an all-inclusive league having at its disposal an international military force stronger than the army of any one nation.

Since the stage is not yet set for an organization which is both universal and an effective instrument for peace, each state must be the judge of how it can best solve its security problem. I am making no sensational revelation when I say that a military alliance sometimes weakens a state instead of strengthening it. Suppose, for example, that Mexico concluded an alliance with the Soviet Union. Does anyone think that Mexico's security would be thereby increased?

For the present, therefore, neutrality will remain the policy of many states. But it must not be interpreted as a policy of indifference. Neutrality, as the Swiss Foreign Minister recently pointed out, must not be a pretext for doing nothing when circumstances demand action from the international community. Neutrality, he emphasized, is by no means an isolationist policy; on the contrary it offers immense opportunities for collaboration in pacific

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activities. These words of my Swiss colleague apply perfectly to the Swedish people's conception of neutrality.

Mr. Unden's thesis has been reinforced by the repercussions of the atomic explosion in Russia, and if the Swedish elections turned on the question of neutrality, the victory of the Socialists would be assured. The benefits of his policy, moreover, extend beyond his own country. It is good for the cause of peace to have Sweden in a position where it might be able to play the role of intermediary between East and West which France has been obliged to renounce.

John Dewey: American Radical

BY JEROME NATHANSON

THE liberal, it becomes increasingly evident, is in a perilous position. For while he is earnest and well-intentioned, he has no political philosophy to serve him as a constant base. The absolutists, whether of the right or left, know what they want and can give you cogent reasons for wanting it. They always see the tactics of a given situation in the perspective of strategy for the long-run campaign.

Among the liberals there is a curious pattern of concern with the Russians. This is undoubtedly sound in the framework of a broad philosophy, but when it is mistaken for a large part of the philosophy itself, it leaves the liberal in a pitiable position. For just as in the religious struggles of our time, it means that the liberal is forever fighting on ground chosen by the absolutists. What he needs is a consistent philosophy which will give affirmative meaning to his efforts.

The irony is that that philosophy has been available to him for many years. It is the philosophy of John Dewey. The average liberal "knows" Dewey (or at least knows there is some difference between him and New York's Governor!), and he is also aware that he has gone to schools affected, in one way or another, by Dewey's theories of education. But even those who have read his books seem, by and large, to ignore him in their political practice as much as do academic philosophers in their professional thought. The strange part of it is that in the long run he will probably rank with Jefferson, Emerson, and James in his influence on the democratic mind. A brief glance at his political philosophy may reveal why that is.

Essentially, Dewey is a radical democrat. This means, first, that for him the chief concern of philosophy, as of the human enterprise itself, is with people and their problems. The aim of a democratic society is not merely political, in the sense of providing representative government and a bill of rights; it is not merely economic, in the sense of providing equal opportunities to everyone; it is not merely social, in the sense of opposing a hereditary élite and inter-group discrimination. Nor is it merely all these things together. No, democracy is a moral ideal, a sense of what *should* prevail in human relations.

Dewey's radical democracy means, second, that a desirable state of human relations can never be achieved by forcing something down people's throats. No one on top of the heap can ever "deliver" people to a certain salvation, or dictate to them what they have to do. This way, the battle is already lost in the doing. The trouble with absolutisms, whether of the right or left, whether political or religious, lies neither in their goals nor in their methods alone. It lies primarily in their separating methods from goals, in forcing a disjunction between means and ends. It lies, for example, in their assurance that concentrating ever more power in the hands of the state is the way to insure that the state will wither away. Or, to bring the matter closer home, it lies in assuming that workers in a factory or office who are constantly bossed by their superiors can nevertheless be responsible citizens who refuse to be bossed by a political machine. Dewey has never ceased stressing that our ends are determined by the means we use.

His radical democracy means, finally, that "shared experience is the greatest of human goods." Society should be so organized as to free the possibilities in people for sharing with others. This is a simple dictum but a hard doctrine. For genuinely to share on one's best levels is to be what the physicians call healthy, the economists secure, the educators understanding, and the psychiatrists mature.

Obviously, there is no one way in which people should share with others. Husbands and wives do it differently from parents and children, and one family differently from another. This is not a fact to which we have to resign ourselves but an opportunity of which we should take advantage. For the richness of life lies not in its uniformities, despite the ambitions of thought-controllers. It lies in its diversities. A good society would be one in which conscious effort was made to multiply

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JEROME NATHANSON, a leader of the New York Society for Ethical Culture, is completing a book on the philosophy of John Dewey, whose ninetieth birthday is being widely celebrated this week.

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the ways in which experiences could be shared. And the one condition would be that desirable human relations were seen to be those which lead to ever more fruitful sharings. If this sounds abstract, it is only the abstractness of a valid guiding principle of action. If it sounds vague, it is only the vagueness of a human experience which is limited in its achievements but limitless in its reaches.

THIS being the aim of a democratic society, how is it to be attained? The answer is, through the use of intelligence. This is hardly a revelation. Dewey did not discover intelligence, nor is he the first, as he will not be the last, to recommend its use. In these days of our lack of faith in it we are accustomed to bewailing the stupidity of the human race. If we turn the coin, however, we need not be ashamed of the intelligence humanity has manifested. The trouble is that we have shown it narrowly and spottily. For the organized use of intelligence is nothing other than the scientific or experimental method. It is commonplace to say that we have used it, with overpowering results, in physical investigations and in technology. Despite our endless talk about the need for it in human relations, however, we have hardly begun to use it here.

What is the reason for this? The reason according to Dewey—and here we come closer to grips with his radical democracy—is that existing institutions stand in the way of our doing so. We may comfort ourselves with words, but we live in the line of our activities, and to a greater degree than we like to think, we are what we do. It goes even farther than this. In large measure we are what our society is and does. An autocratic family life, a dictatorial industrial life, a boss-ridden political life, a money-dominated social life—these are not the institutions likely to produce a democratic citizenry. In so far as such patterns characterize the common life, they restrict the use of intelligence. Intelligence, which ought to be used in behalf of the broadest democratic aims, becomes instead the servant of vested and class interests. What we have to do, therefore, is reconstruct our institutions so that the ways in which we live, our day-to-day activities, are more in line with the democratic society we hope will eventuate.

It would be convenient if the lines of such reconstruction could be fixed in advance. The goal would then be set and the path, however difficult, could be clearly charted. But in a changing world of changing human needs and possibilities this is impossible. In this as in all the other undertakings of life our approach ought to be experimental.

Now "experimentalism" is a key word which many people have picked up from Dewey, only to use it in ways which have nothing whatever to do with him. For the experimental attitude is often taken to mean a sitting on the fence, a directionless, a spineless attitude. Dewey, "the great destroyer" in philosophy, however, has always had character enough to stand *for* certain things, and wisdom enough to realize that human experimentalism did not begin with his writing books about it. We may not be able to fix the lines of institutional reconstruction, but there is sufficient accumulated experience, as there are obvious needs and blockages in our present situation, to make it possible to point to basic things which require doing now.

John Dewey

The first thing we have to do is reconstruct our sense of property relations. We have to see that vast areas of what we call private enterprise are "private" in only a legalistic sense. In every other sense they are as public as anything else in our common life. Viewed objectively, there is no democratic justification for the private control of public institutions. An intelligent public, once it clearly sees this, will proceed to reconstruct property relations. This by no means indicates the necessary transfer of property from private hands to those of the state. Ideally, on the contrary, the reconstruction would be achieved by the voluntary agreement and cooperation of the interested parties—owners, management, labor, consumers. But one way or another this reconstruction is a "must."

WHEN he says that it is a necessity, however, Dewey does not mean that economic institutions are everywhere and always the basic factors in society. He does not accept the Marxist dogma that there is only one handle to social organization, and that one the economic. He means that the kind of persons we are is determined by our total culture. In our time industrialism is the dominant cultural fact. How we live in our industrial relations has more to do with what we are than any other one thing. If we are to have a democratic culture in which life is genuinely and richly shared, therefore, we must have a democratic industry in which responsibilities and decisions are shared. That is why the reconstruction of property relations is essential for us.

Many people agree with this in the abstract but then retreat to the bromide about our inability to change human nature. What they mean specifically is that, whether we like it or not, the private ownership of property and the profit motive have given us our present life of comparative abundance. To tamper with these would

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diminish if not destroy our productive possibilities. Human nature is what it is, and *this* is what it is.

Not at all, Dewey replies. Human nature is what a given culture makes it. The profit motive is important to us because our culture has placed a primary emphasis on it. If we were a people that condemned the gaining of profits from others' labor, then our "human nature" would be such that none of us would ever think of trying to make such profits. Nor is the existing system of property relations responsible for our economic development. Modern science and technology lie behind that. In our society private property and technology have gone hand in hand, but there is no necessary tie between them. If previously we had any doubts about this, we now have a public demonstration of it. The Russians, with a different system of property relations and without the profit motive, in thirty years have transformed a nation of peasants and serfs into producers of the atom bomb. What we have to do is see to it that industry, like all other public institutions, is organized to yield the utmost public benefit. The shift from an ego-centered profit motivation to one of cooperative concern would be important not merely in its consequences. More important is what would happen to people in their day-to-day sharing of responsibilities on the job.

This, however, is only part of what is involved. We have said that the use of organized intelligence or science in human relations is with us more talk than actuality. The reason for this is that, as matters now stand, science is the handmaiden of private and class interests. The scientist has nothing to say about the way his findings will be used and in the majority of cases mighty little to say about the kind of research he will do. What happens, in a nutshell, is that science is used to carry out policies about which it has no say. Or, to put the matter differently, intelligence is used for ends which have not been determined intelligently. What we require is the use of science in *determining* policies. But this can be fully accomplished only when scientists are relieved from serving narrow interests, and when we are prepared to adopt an intelligent policy regardless of whose ox is gored.

The use of freed intelligence in determining and achieving common ends, this is the essence of Dewey's radical democracy. This is what it means to say, as Dewey has said, that to keep its integrity in our time liberalism must become radical. This is what it means to follow the democratic vision in an industrial and scientific age.

In the nature of things, there can be no guaranties about the outcome. But if the "lost" liberal should ever join with like-minded others in a long-run campaign based on this philosophy, he would find that liberalism need no longer be directionless and fragmentized. He would find that he was centering his life in the vital movement of a liberal community.

No Comment

NAZISM is not being revived in Germany, United States High Commissioner John J. McCloy said tonight, although Hitler's former followers hold 30 per cent of the top government and industry jobs. "There is enough sense of freedom and decency in the German people," he said, "on which can be built a healthy, peaceful state."—Associated Press dispatch from Washington, August 9.

FRANKFURT, Germany, August 31—A class of political and economic outcasts has been created in western Germany in a situation that has ugly overtones of retaliation against "collaborators" with the Western Allied powers. These outcasts include persons who have worked for any military-government agency but especially those who were employed in the denazification courts. . . . Employers are not bold enough to say that previous connection with the United States Military Government or a denazification court is reason for rejection. However, the same technique is applied as that of anti-Semites who refuse to hire Jews. —Jack Raymond in the New York *Times*.

THE DENAZIFICATION CHIEF in Bad Seegenberg has been arrested for being a Nazi. —Associated Press Dispatch from Hamburg, September 23.

WIESBADEN, September 23—The free press, the best and perhaps last remaining hope of German democracy, is threatened. Newspapers licensed by Allied Military Government, though below American and English standards, have tried courageously to cleanse the German mind, closed and poisoned by Hitler. But now that the Allies have turned responsibility over to German authorities, the banned Nazi papers are reappearing. —Ludwell Denny in the New York *World-Telegram*.

MUNICH, September 11—Max Willmy, printer of the notorious anti-Semitic hate sheet, *Der Stürmer*, is planning to resume publication of a newspaper in Nürnberg. . . . Right now, in Nürnberg, Dr. Ottmar Best, who used to be the Nazi editor of the *Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*, is putting out a paper called the *Neuer Kurier*, financed by a group of large industrialists. Not long ago he was quoted as saying that "my newspaper will show the German people what they lost in Hitler."—William Attwood in the New York *Post Home News*.

MUNICH, September 7—German workmen today started digging up the graves of thousands who died in the Dachau concentration camp. Officials said that the earth was to be used for commercial purposes, presumably for pottery manufacture because of high clay content. . . . Numerous human bones were exposed . . . separated and thrown into a wooden box. Nearby a sign bearing the Star of David was lying on the grass. . . . A German representative of the contracting company insisted this afternoon that the bones were those of residents of a community that had existed more than five hundred years ago. —Michael James in the New York *Times*.

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Rise and Fall of Mexico's Revolution

BY JESUS SILVA-HERZOG

Mexico City, October 10

THREE great historical events have profoundly affected the national life of Mexico—the revolution for independence, the revolution for clerical reform, and the so-called Mexican Revolution. The first ended the rule of Spain; the second freed the people from the economic and social control of the clergy; the third broke the power of the great landed proprietors. The third, the Mexican Revolution, at the same time brought the country out of its semi-feudal stage and introduced pre-capitalist conditions in some regions and full capitalism in others, notably in the large cities like Mexico, D. F., Monterrey, and Guadalajara.

Under the rule of Porfirio Díaz, who directed the destinies of the republic for thirty years, the formation of immense estates was facilitated, and the influx of foreign capital was encouraged by an open-door policy that disregarded the people's real needs. It was a government of privileges for the privileged and of oppression for the masses. The people's hunger—for bread, for land, for justice, and for liberty—produced the Mexican Revolution.

The armed struggle began on November 20, 1910, as a preponderantly political movement. Francisco I. Madero, its leader, honestly believed that all problems could be solved by preventing the reelection of Díaz and the governors of the states and making the popular vote effective. He was mistaken. The evil lay deeper, as events soon showed.

The same thing happened in Mexico that has happened so often in other countries. The men who start a revolution find themselves forced to go much farther than they intended to. The demands of their followers drive them toward new goals. Two courses are then open to them: they can embody and direct the aspirations of the people, which are almost always vague and ill-defined, or they can abandon the very men who first gave them support. Madero, because he had never dug deep into Mexican realities, separated during his Presidency from many of the men who had raised him to power. Then, when his popularity was sadly diminished, he was betrayed by the villainous Victoriano Huerta, an old soldier of "Porfirism." The fighting continued for seven years, desperate and bloody fighting. It cost millions of lives and wealth that had been accumulated through years of peace. But while it was going on there was gradually formulated what might be called the ideology of the Revolution.

It is interesting to note that neither the manifestoes of the revolutionary leaders nor other writings of the political opponents of Díaz and Huerta, from 1906 to 1917, use the language of European socialism or of utopian or scientific socialism. The ideas expressed are different, too, being derived from the Mexican experience. Our great movement was born of the sufferings of a hungry and oppressed people.

The hopes of the people were crystallized in the constitution of February 5, 1917, particularly in Articles 3, 27, 123, and 130. Article 3, on education, declared that instruction should be secular, not religious. Article 27 established the principle that the nation has the right to impose limitations on private ownership of property as the public interest dictates: the riches of the subsoil belong to the people and are inalienable; the great estates can be broken up and divided among the landless. Article 123 laid the basis for labor legislation —for fixing maximum hours and minimum wages, protecting women and children, upholding the right to strike, and so on. Article 130 defined the functions of the clergy. It must not be forgotten that the Mexican priesthood has always been against all social progress; sharply divorcing action from theory, it has opposed the most just and generous causes. It was against independence, against the reforms, against Hidalgo, Morales, Juárez, Madero, and Carranza, against all the great patriots who built the Mexican nation.

The fighting ended with the defeat of the army which had supported Huerta and defended the interests of the big landholders, bankers, and industrialists. The Revolution then became the government. Few of the revolutionary leaders had had any experience in administration, but despite the difficulties and their mistakes the reconstruction of the country was begun.

Since 1917 the successive national administrations have been called "revolutionary governments." It has been objected that the term is self-contradictory, to govern being the opposite of to revolt, but its use is justified by the fact that up to a point these governments were even farther to the left than the 1917 constitution and pursued revolutionary aims. In agrarian and labor matters the constitution was interpreted in the most radical possible sense, and some paragraphs of vital articles were revised to satisfy new imperatives of social policy.

From 1917 to the beginning of 1930 the Presidents

JESUS SILVA-HERZOG was director of the Mexican oil administration under President Cárdenas. This is the third of a series of articles on democracy in Latin America.

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of the republic were as follows: Venustiano Carranza, until May, 1920; Adolfo de la Huerta, interim President for six months; Alvaro Obregón, from the end of 1920 to the end of 1924; Plutarco Elías Calles, from December 10, 1924, to February 4, 1930. De la Huerta was more revolutionary than Carranza, Obregón more so than de la Huerta, Calles more so than Obregón; Portes Gil remained, generally speaking, at about the same point as his predecessor. Under Presidents Pascual Ortíz Rubio (February 5, 1930, to August 31, 1932) and Abelardo Rodríguez (September 10, 1932, to November 30, 1934) no further progress was made.

Lázaro Cárdenas

Lázaro Cárdenas, who held office for the next six years, deserves special mention. All his acts as President stemmed from his three basic aims—to raise the standard of living of workers and peasants, to defend the nation's sovereignty, and to uphold civil liberties. He distributed more land than all his predecessors together; he uncompromisingly protected the interests of both industrial and agricultural workers; he opened the country's doors to political refugees from foreign dictatorships; he seized the properties of the oil companies which refused to obey a decree of the Mexican Supreme Court. Cárdenas moved as far as possible toward the left. The love which the people gave him was unprecedented, and it never waned.

THE revolutionary governments, as I said above, carried forward the task of reconstruction. Under each new President its rhythm was accelerated. The small shopkeepers and the big landowners had of course suffered greatly from the civil struggle, the former losing their goods and the latter, ultimately, their land. But the merchants in the large cities, the manufacturers, and the bankers had suffered very little. Soon new fortunes were built up; new rich men appeared—politicians and generals who had parted company with the Revolution, greedy and unscrupulous civil servants, men who sold supplies to the government, public-works contractors, and business men of all kinds with the flexible ethics of a capitalist society. The old and the new rich, bound together by their common interests, gradually formed a bourgeoisie that was much more enterprising and aggressive than its counterpart in the time of Díaz.

This Mexican middle class, supported by congenial foreign interests, detested the principles of the Revolution. More and more effectively it used its power to curb the creative and progressive tendencies of the government. At first it had no success, because the revolutionary impulse was so strong, but little by little it exerted a neutralizing influence and finally gained the upper hand.

The Mexican Revolution appears to have reached its culmination in the middle of 1938; after that there was a period when it neither advanced nor receded, a period which ended in the first months of Avila Camacho's term of office. The middle class controlled the main propaganda channels—radio, press, and films—and could thus sow confusion in the mind of the people; with its wealth it could corrupt and break up the ranks of its enemy. The Revolution, for lack of clarity in its ideas and of rectitude in its officials—high, medium, and low—underwent in 1943 a moral and ideological crisis, a crisis that ended in agony and death.

It was the logical outcome. Every revolution is an event in history and as such transitory. History is the drama of mankind, and revolutions are simply episodes in the drama. The Mexican Revolution could not expect to live forever. It died silently, without anyone noticing what was happening.

The Revolution ceased to exist in the last days of Avila Camacho's Presidency, its demise coinciding roughly with the end of the Second World War. At the same time a new doctrine was promulgated, the doctrine that all Mexicans are as one, united by mutual love—a noble and surely a Christian doctrine. In Mexico the hawk will live in peace and affection with the dove, the wolf with the lamb, the starving with the glutted, the needy with the rich, the exploiter with the exploited. Meanwhile confusion of thought is engendered, and immorality increases.

It is of course generally recognized that contemporary man is facing the gravest crisis of his existence. The present is a moment of historical transition. A wave of darkness threatens to engulf civilization, or what we have agreed to call civilization. Statesmen and diplomats give the impression of having lost all judgment, of lacking the most elementary common sense. Mexico will not be able to escape this crisis or the influence of three great international events—the death of President Roosevelt, the fall of Berlin, and the splitting of the atom. The transcendent importance of these events is still not fully perceived.

The present government of Mexico is not a continuation of those that preceded it. There is a new climate—new goals and different methods. Whether it likes it or not, Mexico finds its course determined by the economic and political interdependence of nations. It is inclosed in a community of nations, not a peaceful community, unfortunately, but one in which evil forces are constantly struggling to subordinate to their own ends the welfare of the human species.

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EVERYBODY'S BUSINESS

By KEITH HUTCHISON

The Gold Doctors

BELIEF in the extraordinary virtues of gold is, of course, among the most persistent of human superstitions. From the earliest times, as the folklore of all peoples shows, gold has been used to promote fertility and secure immortality: in many parts of the world it is still valued for its magical qualities. Hindus, for instance, pay large premiums to obtain it because gifts of gold ornaments to a bride are considered an essential means of insuring a fruitful marriage; only the poorest families will substitute silver.

Most of us in the West have shed the more primitive superstitions about gold or at least thrust them deep into the subconscious. But if the yellow metal is no longer regarded as a preventive of sterility, we have among us eminent gentlemen who believe it has almost magical properties as a cure for economic ills. The difficulty is that while these doctors agree that gold should be restored to its monetary throne, they differ widely about the means to be used.

Members of the Gold Standard League, for example, want a gold currency, not merely a gold-backed one. They believe we should again have the right to exchange our dollar bills for coin or to buy bullion bars on the existing basis of $35 an ounce. Not that they approve this figure as the legal fixed price of gold at the present time. To them Roosevelt's devaluation of the dollar in 1933-34 was a wicked piece of debasement. It was just as dishonest, said Philip Le Boutillier, department-store executive and New York chairman of the Gold Standard League, in an address on September 8, as would be a law reducing the yard from thirty-six to twenty-four inches: the result was to raise prices over a term of years and so defraud all life-insurance policy-holders, savings-bank depositors, and owners of government bonds.

Certainly inflation in recent years has reduced the purchasing power of the dollar and hence the value of all forms of security with a fixed interest rate. Whether this has much to do with devaluation in 1933-34 is, to say the least, arguable. In 1932 the B. L. S. wholesale price index (1926 - 100) averaged 64.8; in 1939, 78.6. In the latter year, therefore, it was the borrower of 1926 dollars rather than the lender who was being cheated, since in terms of goods he owed some 20 per cent more than his original loan. The rise in prices which has hit creditors since Pearl Harbor was due to the war and would surely have occurred whatever the gold content of the dollar. In World War I prices rose even more steeply, although the value of gold remained throughout at $20.67 an ounce. Inevitably fluctuations in the price level benefit some groups and hurt others: it is one of the inevitable risks of business under the private-enterprise system, a risk which existed in the palmiest days of the gold standard.

Among the loudest grumblers about the present high level of world prices are the gold producers. Their costs have been rising, while the value of their product in terms of dollars—and their ultimate market is the United States—has remained unchanged. From their point of view it is the purchasing power of gold that has been impaired. Thus at the recent meeting of the International Monetary Fund, N. C. Havenga, South African Finance Minister, pleaded for a uniform upward revision of gold parities. His country, he said, was forced to sell its chief product at 1939 prices to pay for manufactured imports at 1949 prices. The gold-buying countries, he maintained, had no "ethical right to maintain a distortion of the terms of trade in their favor, a distortion that has resulted from an internal inflation which none of them has been able to stop."

Mr. Havenga and Mr. Le Boutillier have much in common. They agree in condemning inflation, and the South African politician would heartily indorse the New York business man's assertion that gold is "the truest and most permanent store of value the world has ever known": both desire restoration of the universal gold standard. Yet when it comes to action, they part company violently. Mr. Havenga is hoping for a higher dollar price for gold. Mr. Le Boutillier loudly applauds Secretary of the Treasury Snyder's refusal to contemplate such a step.

The difference is dictated by different interests. The South African is naturally anxious to see the Rand mines earning larger profits and making larger contributions to revenue. He remembers the boom magically conjured up by devaluation in the thirties. However, his purpose is not one with which we can have much sympathy when we recall how the South African mining industry has exploited its native workers. Moreover, it is doubtful whether a world suffering from a chronic shortage of food and other essentials should encourage the use of scarce resources to increase production of a rather useless metal which is relatively plentiful even though stocks are badly distributed.

To my mind the purposes of the Gold Standard League are no more worthy of support. The interest of its members —business men and conservative economists—lies in curbing government expenditure, and to this end they seek to equip the federal fiscal machine with a gold "governor." The way this would operate has been succinctly described by the *Wall Street Journal*, which is backing the League's campaign. "This newspaper is convinced," said an editorial on October 7, "that most Americans would still prefer paper money and deposit money up to the moment when they became persuaded that Washington fiscal policy would complete the ruination of the paper dollar. In that event a popular demand for gold coin would put the brakes on government spending—if we had a gold-convertible dollar."

One need not favor government extravagance—personally I believe the budget should be balanced at this time—to oppose this plan, which would give a handful of men controlling press and radio the power to organize a scare about the value of the paper dollar and so start a panicky rush to turn bills into gold. Moreover, we should, I think, beware of monetary gadgets, even twenty-four carat gold ones.

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BOOKS *and the* ARTS

Essays and Asides

THE FIRST TWENTY-FIVE YEARS

BY JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

TWENTY-FIVE years ago this autumn I wrote my first drama review for *The Nation*—of "What Price Glory?" by Laurence Stallings and Maxwell Anderson. One needs no virtue higher than persistence to become in time the oldest living something-or-other, and while I am not yet quite even that, I believe that I am, in point of service and next to Mr. Nathan, the oldest practitioner in New York of a somewhat unusual profession. Acquaintances aware of the fact are about equally divided between those who say, "What a delightful life!" and those who inquire, "How on earth do you stand it?"

The latter are very likely to be persons who take literature seriously, and they not infrequently point out with ill-disguised condescension that at least nine out of ten new theatrical productions are below the artistic level which a man of intelligence and taste ought to be able to endure. They assume—what I think is actually open to dispute—that the average quality of contemporary plays is considerably below that of contemporary belles-lettres in other forms, and they conclude that I must be either heroically self-sacrificing or merely comfortably vulgar. Neither judgment can I accept. The theater does have a legitimate appeal which is not strictly proportioned to the literary merit of the words being spoken, and I should like, perhaps by way of self-justification, to try to say what one basis of that appeal is.

In my case it has very little to do with what is commonly meant by the "glamour" of the stage. It is true that I saw my first adult play before I was six years old and that I have attended the theater pretty persistently ever since. People who can say that are generally expected to add that they have never lost the special thrill of anticipation, that when the house lights dim and the footlights go on they become as little children again, etc., etc. If I ever experienced anything of the kind—which I doubt—it was too long ago to be remembered. In my youth I did take advantage now and then of the special facilities I had for going behind the scenes, but I do not believe that I was ever in the slightest degree stagestruck. Since then I have known some interesting playwrights and met some attractive actors, but I do not think in either case that the fact that they were part of the theatrical profession made them for that special reason any more "glamorous" than anyone else.

Yet for all that, it remains true that a play which one follows in the company of one's fellows is something more than the words spoken, something more, even, than the words plus whatever of special meaning or passion a good performance puts into them. One participates not only in the play but also in the reactions of the audience. One senses as one can never sense while reading a book that one is sharing an experience. It is impossible to feel wholly isolated or completely alone. One's fellows are indeed one's fellows—just in so far as they are, at any moment, being moved by what is moving oneself.

The most obvious proof that something of this sort takes place is the phenomenon of laughter. Everyone who has ever both seen and read a comedy knows that something which can at best provoke a smile when met on the printed page may be irresistibly hilarious when shared with an audience. And it is absurd to say that "it seemed better than it was," or that it wasn't "really funny." Seeming was its business, and its function was to make possible that essentially social thing called laughter, which binds men together at least as truly and as importantly as any other impulse they can share.

Those who are fond of saying that drama began as ritual and that it ought to become ritualistic again are wrong in one assumption, for acted drama has never been anything else, and those who assemble in Forty-fifth Street are publicly worshiping some of the oldest gods even when they are shaking with communal laughter over the ageless predicaments of the victims in a farce. If group emotions other than those which express themselves as audible mirth had equally obvious outward expressions, we should know no less surely that people come to a theater to feel many things which they cannot feel alone, that what they seek in tragedy is not merely the experience of pity and terror but the experience of experiencing it publicly, of paying open tribute to the humanity which can thus confess in assembly its membership in a cult.

Perhaps the theater is, indeed, the only truly catholic temple still standing and gathers the only worshipers not divided. The church is sectarian; nearly every other public meeting place is partisan. People attend the political rally to express their separateness from certain of their fellows as much as to express their agreement with certain others, and the churchgoer is by no means always exempt from the limitations of the same attitude. But an audience laughing or weeping at a play is truly united. On what other occasion does it confess that all the members are meeting on a common ground? On what other occasion is it so openly acknowledged that human beings can agree? And for that reason it may be that those plays whose subject is honor, or pity, or fear, or love are actually more significant than those which deal with what are called "problems." They generate the most inclusive solidarities.

Those who scorn the theater often complain that there is in it too little opportunity for any except mass appeal. I am certainly not one who would want all art to be limited to that which is immediately accessible to all. But to find some excuse for one institution where nothing even approaching the

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esoteric can survive is not necessarily to defend the cheap, the hackneyed, and the obvious. All question of absolute merit aside, would anyone have ever guessed that "A Street Car Named Desire" and "The Death of a Salesman" would have mass appeal? Yet obviously each strikes some chord, and the audiences which respond to it in unison are undergoing an experience radically different from any possible to the reader of any best-seller, good or bad. They are agreeing publicly about something they did not know that they agreed about, and even now could not define. In a society which seems about to fly to pieces this is not unimportant. Perhaps no group has completely lost its chance of survival as long as its members continue to recognize that they agree in at least one thing: they are members of the human race. It is something which can be forgotten.

Koestler on Palestine

PROMISE AND FULFILMENT; PALESTINE, 1917-1949. By Arthur Koestler. The Macmillan Company. $4.

IN THIS record of events in Palestine between 1917 and 1949 Arthur Koestler offers what he describes as a "psycho-somatic view of history," stressing the part played by "irrational forces and emotive bias." Mr. Koestler's emphasis on psychological factors hardly adds up to a philosophy of history, but he has thoroughly succeeded in composing a chronicle from which the author's, rather than history's, "emotive bias" is rarely absent. Readers of "Thieves in the Night" are familiar with Koestler's rancors and disenchantments. The novel could be admired as brilliant and often moving fiction, but a history, no matter how subjective, cannot claim the latitude of a work of the imagination. This book, despite its superficial air of unsweet reasonableness, is so pervasively partisan that it becomes primarily a political tract.

In the first half of the book, which recapitulates the development of Zionism, the growth of the Haganah, the illegal immigration, and the negotiations at Lake Success, Mr. Koestler goes over well-worn territory; the second half consists largely of the articles that appeared in the *Herald Tribune.* The whole is enlivened by the crackle of aphorisms and brilliant observations which frequently cancel each other. For instance, Zionism is described as a "freak phenomenon" which produced a series of "freak reactions" culminating in the birth of Israel. At the same time Mr. Koestler states that Israel interests him because it presents one of "the basic archetypes of human conflict and experience." You cannot have it both ways—freak and archetype. And the author does not resolve the fundamental contradiction by observing that general laws can be studied in freaks. In the same way Koestler veers capriciously between the interpretation of events as determined by chance and references to the "logic of history."

With one exception there is no issue in regard to which Koestler does not speak from both sides of his mouth. On one page the Jewish pioneers "came as conquerors," though humane ones; on another we are told that the Jewish colonizers "acquired their land with hard cash from willing sellers" and reclaimed it "with the work of their hands." The Arabs have been wronged and not wronged. The British commit diabolical acts but are not "diabolical," and so on. This luminous comprehension of all the conflicting factors would be impressive if it stemmed from some higher ethical level, above the battle. But Mr. Koestler is not detached; he is alternately vindictive.

The one consistent attitude in the book is the author's championship of the Revisionists and the Irgun. In Koestler's interpretation there is one villain, the Jewish Agency, and one hero, sometimes erring but basically good, the Irgun. All the unamiable features of terrorism are chivalrously placed by Koestler on the shoulders of the Irgun's fellow-terrorists, the Sternists.

According to Koestler's thesis the "hypocritical" Jewish Agency vacillated between timidity and terrorism while pretending to be law-abiding. The

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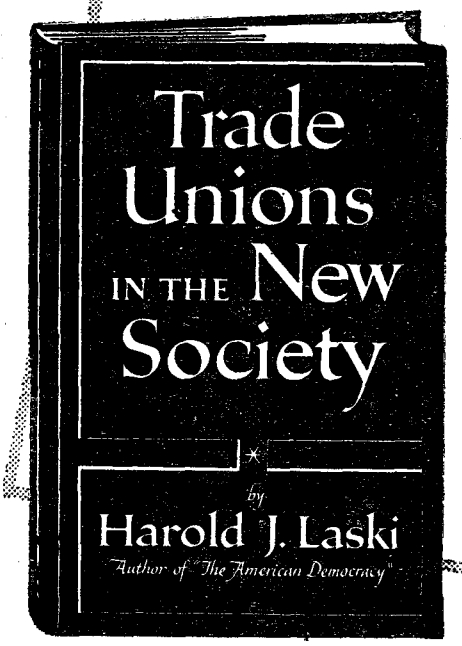

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"Quixotic" Irgunists had silently to accept the role of whipping-boy for acts encouraged by the Jewish Agency. While flagellating the Zionist leadership for cowardice, Koestler invokes their ghetto mentality and "social-democratic" traditions. "The German Socialists never fought; the Austrians fought when it was too late. The Jewish Agency would probably have shared the same fate if the terrorists and the extremist element within the Haganah had not forced the pace." Such a distortion of history verges on the ludicrous. Mr. Koestler has apparently forgotten that the chairman of the Agency Executive was none other than the Socialist Ben Gurion, and that the whole organization of resistance against the British and, later, the Arabs was in his hands and those of his craven social-democratic colleagues.

No stop of Revisionist propaganda is missed. Koestler states categorically that in blowing up the King David Hotel the Irgun "had acted on orders of the Haganah." This is simply not true. What is true is that the explosion took place in a period when the Haganah sought to control Irgun activities to prevent just such outrages. The King David calamity put an end to all further attempts at a "united front" until the Arab attack.

In a studiedly artless "now-it-may-be-told" vein Mr. Koestler gives the Beigin version of the Altalena incident. The revelations are conveniently premature. Mr. Koestler knows that until peace terms are signed, the Israeli government will not open its archives. Without at the present time examining Koestler's completely unsupported charges of government collusion, suffice it to point out that the Altalena, laden with arms, appeared in open daylight on the Tel Aviv shore directly in front of the Kaethe Dan Hotel, from whose porch the assembled U. N. observers and foreign correspondents could watch this spectacular breach of the truce with a maximum of comfort. After his followers were disarmed, Beigin shrieked reminiscently over the radio: "If we go down, we will see to it that the state of Israel sinks with us."

All this would perhaps be academic if it were not for the fact that the Irgun plus a majority of the Revisionists has reappeared on the political scene as the Freedom Party, under the leadership of Beigin. Mr. Koestler objects to the characterization of the Freedom Party and its Revisionist forbears as "fascist." He blandly describes them as nineteenth-century liberals, and he expects the Freedom Party to become "the liberal reform party of the middle classes" in opposition to the "Socialist half" of the country.

What about these "nineteenth-century liberals"? Their notorious record of opposition to organized labor and every form of social progress is admitted by Koestler himself (p. 306). Their spokesmen have openly called for "a Jewish Mussolini," praised "holy falsehood" as a means of propaganda, and demanded the destruction of the Histadruth (the organized labor movement). In September, 1935, the *Oriente Moderna,* an official Italian publication, offered expert praise: "Their paper, *Hayarden,* supports Italy in the conflict in Ethiopia because the Revisionists are extreme nationalists and stern opponents of labor." The Revisionists also had kind words for Franco.

One of the curious features of the recent elections in Israel was that the Freedom Party received its biggest vote, 16 per cent, in Tel Aviv; in the country as a whole it received only 12 per cent. The main backing for Beigin comes not from flaming youth but from a sector of the bourgeoisie anxious to destroy Mapai's "New Dealism" and progressive social legislation. A coalition of chauvinism, economic reaction, and big business is a twentieth-century stereotype rather than nineteenth-century or any other variety of liberalism. Even for an ex-Communist Koestler's political allegiance is perplexing.

The author of "Darkness at Noon" is a master at dramatizing an intellectual dilemma. In "Promise and Fulfilment" the dilemma is not that of Israel or Zionism but of the author himself. Since psychological interpretations are in order, one may venture to point out that the book is an almost classic example of what has been called "Jewish self-hatred." Mr. Koestler has made no secret of the aesthetic revulsion with which "ghetto Jews," Palestinian "Tarzans," and various aspects of Israel inspire him. The process which began in

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"Thieves in the Night" is, perhaps unconsciously, completed in "Promise and Fulfilment," and finds its epitome in the description of the eerie "Mr. Abramovitz" who "each time you burn him alive, stick a knife into his stomach, or pump gas into his lungs, pops up again like a jack-in-the box with a more horribly ingratiating smile, and offers you a second-hand suit or a share of real estate."

Mr. Abramovitz's sufferings disturb Mr. Koestler, but he never likes or respects the victim. Now, with the establishment of Israel, he can at last be rid of Abramovitz without sense of guilt. To Jews outside Israel Koestler recommends complete assimilation, including the renunciation of the Jewish religion. Jews have no right "to place the ominous knapsack, now void of contents, on their children who have not asked for it." It is characteristic that Koestler's contemptuous symbol for Judaism is the peddler's pack. Perhaps this uncontrollable contempt explains why Mr. Koestler can pay only qualified and grudging tribute to Israel's struggle, and why, in his valedictory to the Jewish people, he bestows his blessing on the most sterile and "ominous" movement in Israel.

MARIE SYRKIN

The Double View

LOVING. By Henry Green. The Viking Press. $3.

"LOVING" is the first of Henry Green's novels to appear in this country. (The author is a Birmingham manufacturer writing under a pseudonym, and, it appears, does not move in English literary circles.) In it, and in his three other important books—"Caught," "Back," and "Concluding"—a fresh sensibility is at work, showing itself not so much in a mannered prose, the novelty and difficulty of which have been overemphasized, as in a kind of double view of the conventional materials of English fiction. He sees his characters as they see themselves, while establishing, implicitly, a rational set of values by which to judge them. This habit of mind makes for writing at once sympathetic and ironic.

On one of its several levels of meaning "Loving" is a study of the disintegration of the class system. The scene is an Irish mansion during World War II, a vast demesne English owned and inadequately staffed by English servants, a museum of fantastic antiquities, "a house that had yet to be burned down." Kinalty Castle is an intricate and tottering hierarchy, from its owner, with her two hundred peacocks and her daily walks to an artificial ruin, to the dissatisfied servants—butler, cook, housekeeper, and maids—aliens in a barbarous land, estranged equally from the wild Irish and their effete masters. Manners, in a traditional sense, are decaying. The lack of communication between servants and masters and even within the carefully ordered servant ranks is reminiscent of a Chekhov play.

But "Loving" is about more than disintegration. And it is no twentieth-century "Esther Waters." The plot, which is as perfunctory and inconclusive on its surface as the plot of a novel by Ivy Compton-Burnett, centers on five events: one of the maids steals some waterglass from the cook; a star-sapphire ring belonging to the mistress is lost and recovered; a peacock is strangled by the cook's nephew; the servants discover the adultery of the mistress's daughter-in-law. Through all

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this the butler pursues one of the housemaids, or, more accurately, she contrives that he shall pursue her. Since everything is observed through what may be called the collective awareness of the servants and recapitulated in their terminology, these episodes, products of the complicated machinery of life in a great house, have equal importance—if anything, the stolen waterglass is more important than the adultery.

The double view, rather than the meticulous observation of surfaces, is responsible for the remarkable sense of veracity Green establishes. The one constant in a collapsing society is true love. But what lovers! Here, and again in "Back" and, with variations, in "Concluding," Green is preoccupied with the faithful love of an immoral hobbledehoy for a wayward chit of a girl. By ordinary standards, and these are implicit in the novel, Raunce, the butler, and his girl, the housemaid, Edith, are a pair of scalawags and liars, hard, their eyes fastened on the main chance, vulgarly moved by the most banal sentimentalities, the most conventional taboos. In the explicit logic of the novel they are also a winning pair, and their trite courtship is one of the few believably beautiful love affairs in recent fiction.

From a moral point of view "Loving" is reminiscent of the *tone* which creeps up to befuddle the reader in the last chapters of most of Dickens's novels, in which, as the threads of the plot are neatly tied, the central issues fade away into a miasma of good feeling, and everything comes right at last. In "Loving," and in the later novel, "Back," Green takes this tone and plays with it ironically. Raunce and Edith, having mulcted their employers, decide that they are not doing their duty, that they must return to England and the War. It is impossible to take their sudden patriotism any more seriously than Green's pronouncement that "over in England they were married and lived happily ever after." What gives such a conclusion validity, and never brings it even close to sentimentality, is that this is the way, exactly, in which such people think they feel; these are the motives which, they are sure, impel them to action. Human personality, in a Green novel, is in a state of flux, and likely to produce, casually, some totally unexpected act of lovingkindness or simple heroism or nasty chicanery.

The symbolic episodes are various and intricate. One example out of many must suffice and suffer in the retelling. Watching doves in flight, the "Nanny," a genteel, deaf, dying, and foolish old woman, is led to tell her charges, the mistress's granddaughters and the cook's nephew, a tepid parable about love among the birds. While she chirps on, half heard, the characteristic pattern of life in the dovecote goes on, a rising and swooping and fluttering, and, over and again, a sexual play avidly observed by the children and two eavesdropping housemaids. Everyone but the Nanny begins "soundlessly giggling in the face of beauty." The passage is beautifully written, ordered like a ballet. Within the novel this episode, which in a lesser novelist would be an enchanting vignette, is laden with significance. It is a token of strife: between the old and the young; between the effete genteel and the pushing vulgar; between sexuality and the denial that it exists; between the classes, for the Cockney urchin is precocious as the daughters of the manor are not. It is also about beauty which is inseparable from reproductive and excremental functions. And the dovecote is a careful replica of the Leaning Tower. "Loving" abounds in densely symbolic passages of this kind. It is, altogether, the richest and most entrancing novel that has come out of England since Virginia Woolf's "Between the Acts." ERNEST JONES

A Very Minor Shift

THE LONDON BOOK OF ENGLISH VERSE. Selected by Herbert Read and Bonamy Dobrée. The Macmillan Company. $3.75.

THIS volume is distinguished from the "Oxford Book of English Verse" by the belief of its editors that a shift of sensibility has occurred which renders Palgrave and Quiller-Couch, as it were, and so to speak, quasi-obsolescent. A tenable theory, surely, but one which the average reader would never deduce from the contents of these pages; or else shifts of sensibility which seem cataclysmic to dons do not register on the normal citizen's seismograph. The range here is from Chaucer to Eliot, which is just about where the shift began, not counting what was happening in America around 1912. Moderns included are De la Mare, Hardy, Hopkins, Housman, Lawrence (surprisingly, with three poems), Owen, Synge, and Yeats; in addition to these there is a sprinkling of Americans—Dickinson,

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ROLFE HUMPHRIES

Records

B. H. HAGGIN

THE ballets of Roland Petit presented by Les Ballets de Paris at the Winter Garden turned out to be described with remarkable accuracy by a phrase of Edwin Denby about Petit—"the Orson Welles of French ballet." It is accurate both in its recognition of Petit's powers, and in its characterization of his use of them. The powers are an arrestingly individual style, a flow and variety of invention for every purpose of a wide-ranging imagination and a lightness and wit that one thinks of as French; the use of them is free-wheeling, sometimes flamboyant, sensational. The individual style is interesting even in something as banal in idea as "Le Rendez-vous"; the lightness and wit make the farcical "L'Oeuf à la cocque" a delight; the instances of sensational erotic realism in "Carmen" provide a few shocks in a work of remarkable dramatic imagination and theater sense. Moreover, in addition to the dance style I mentioned a moment ago there is, as with Welles, an over-all style which carries Petit's intelligence and personality into everything in the work. Scenery, costumes, the precise and finished dancing of the talented young members of the company—all appear as expressions of the one creative mind.

The fourth work of the program, William Dollar's "Le Combat," offers an agreeable surprise in the freshly and ingeniously contrived dance style in which the idea of the piece is worked out.

The first RCA Victor 45 r.p.m. recordings I heard last spring, reproduced by the Victor player attachment through my Brook amplifier, came out sounding muffled; and the bright sound of the recordings I heard later was produced by different equipment—the G. E. cartridge playing through the amplifier of the Victor Demonstration Model phonograph that I used in the country. Now I have played these recordings on the new Victor 9-YJ player attachment through my Brook amplifier; and they too come out muffled. Victor has claimed to offer the public a recording and a reproducing equipment designed for each other, and designed to produce sound of the highest fidelity and brilliance; but actually its player attachment has a terrific treble cut-off which prevents the fidelity and brilliance of the recording from being reproduced. It follows that if one wants to play the 45 r.p.m. records one should do so on other equipment—*e.g.* on machines which use the G. E. cartridge.

The one London LP recording I have been able to compare with the original 78 r.p.m. is that of Bartok's Concerto for orchestra (LLP-5, $5.95). The overall sound is very fine—a point of superiority being that the edge is gone from the sound of the violins; a point of inferiority being that there is not quite the liveness and the depth in space of the original. In addition, the surface is gritty; and there is an explosive fault in tracking at the beginning of the Intermezzo.

From Mercury comes a record (MG-10002, $4.85) with LP versions of the recordings of Vivaldi's Concerto Grosso in D minor and Mozart's Divertimento K. 251. The Vivaldi is less bright than the Mercury 78 r.p.m. version, but also less brash and more agreeable; and played through my Brook amplifier it needs boosting of the bass. The Mozart can stand reduction of treble.

From Allegro, a new company, there is an LP record (AL-4, $4.85) with Haydn's Trio No. 1 in G and Beethoven's Trio Opus 70 No. 2 in E flat, played by the Alma Trio (Roman Totenberg, violin, Gabor Rejto, cello, Adolph Baller, piano). These are engaging lesser works of the two composers; the performances are admirably and effectively straightforward; their recorded sound is very good when the treble is drastically reduced and the bass increased—which should make it right for the machines with too much bass and too little treble.

And finally, I have heard the Columbia 78 r.p.m. recording (MM-841, 3 12") of Hindemith's "Nobilissima Visione," a concert suite from the ballet "St. Francis"—sourly unattractive music, performed by Ormandy and the Philadelphia Orchestra, and reproduced with clarity and occasional coarseness in the floods of tone. Surfaces are not quiet.

CONTRIBUTORS

MARIE SYRKIN has recently returned from Palestine, where she spent nine months.

ERNEST JONES is a member of the English Department at Queens College.

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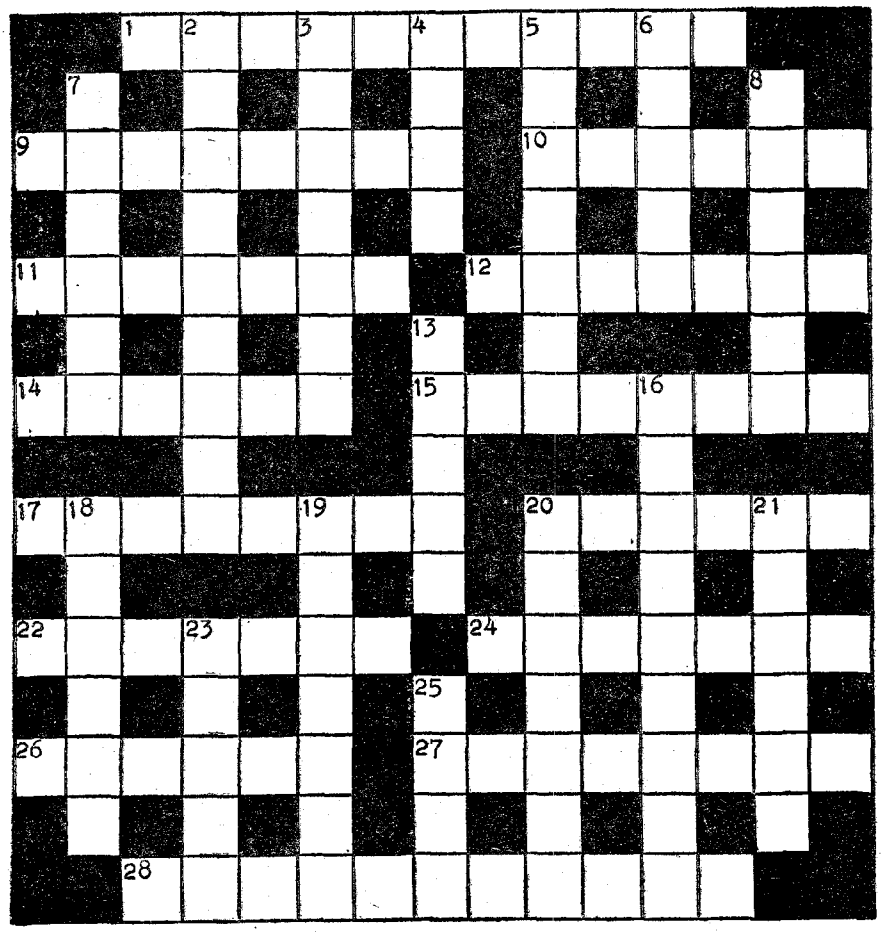
Crossword Puzzle No. 333

BY FRANK W. LEWIS



ACROSS

1 On watch for run-aways? (11)
9 Where the Thinker turns for material. (8)
10 Some barriers are stormed. (6)
11 How might these ways be improved? Sod them. (7)
12 See 18 down
14 Grinds in 20 across. (6)
15 Parallel form of leeway. (8)
17 Natural inclination. (8)
20 The sort of college board that most grads are under. (6)
22 Groceries, less apt to be office supplies. (7)
24 First rate returns on the waters of Micronesia, Melanesia, and Polynesia. (7)
26 Traits of genius, perhaps. (6)
27 A message to a trans-Atlantic friend? (8)
28 What the sheriff places on his vacuum? (11)

DOWN

2 The pig sat in the dinner, perhaps. (9)
3 Minos' daughter and I are confused. (7)
4 Seat at table. (4)
5 Sincere pledge. (7)
6 Menotti's Old Maid might like him, if the change is made. (5)
7 Stick a little notice on this place. (6)
8 Parried and 10 across. perhaps. (6)
13 Skins. (5)
16 Explosive (woman) or target (man). (9)
18 and 12 Sounds like it's going to turn out rosy, but it's still tense. (6, 7)
19 Overcome by force. (7)
20 Location of Providence in the old days. (7)
21 Failed by far. (6)
23 This blank is close. (5)
25 The confounded trouble of every individual! (4)

SOLUTION TO PUZZLE No. 332

ACROSS:—1 MIDSHIPMAN; 6 SCUM; 10 RESPITE; 11 AEOLIAN; 12 HUNTSMAN; 13 KRALL; 15 ONSET; 17 NECROLOGY; 19 BLACKMAIL; 21 MISER; 23 RODEO; 24 VENETIAN; 27 HANDFUL; 28 ZOOLOGY; 29 TRAP; 30 DEAD CENTER.

DOWN:—1 MARE; 2 DISCUSS; 3 HOIST; 4 PNEUMONIA; 5 AGAIN; 7 CHICAGO; 8 MINELAYERS; 9 HOOKWORM; 14 HOMBURG HAT; 16 TAKE-OFFS; 18 COLONIZED; 20 ADDENDA; 22 SEAPORT; 24 VALSE; 25 TROVE; 26 DYER.

Readers are invited to send for a free copy of Mr. Lewis's "ground rules." Address requests to Puzzle Dept., The Nation, 20 Vesey Street, New York 7, New York

Letters to the Editors

Hot Stuff

Dear Sirs: I would like to bring to your attention a recent personal experience that illustrates the consequences of banning material from public high schools.

My curriculum calls for a two-week evaluation of a magazine, any magazine. I chose *The Nation* because I read it regularly and am familiar with it. I went to work on my report, after advising my teacher of my intentions. A few days later she called me aside and asked me politely not to write on *The Nation*. There might, she said, be "repercussions."

What does "repercussions" mean? Does it mean that if I gave the report I might be expelled or receive a poor grade, or does it mean that the teacher would be in jeopardy if she permitted me to hand in such a report?

[Name withheld on request].

New York, October 2

All Clear?

Dear Sirs: We are interested in the comments of *The Nation* [of September 17] on our handling of Paul Blanshard's book.

Let me first assure you that we have no intention of attempting to smother Mr. Blanshard, as the article indicates, and in spite of the sarcasm contained in the article regarding our merchandising considerations, I assure you that the handling of approximately 400,000 items of merchandise makes it essential that the economies of space and merchandising problems be taken into consideration for each item.

Let me also assure you that our decision to put this book on special order is not an attempt on our part to censor Mr. Blanshard's book, as it is not our policy to act as self-appointed censors of what the public should or should not read. I would further like to make it clear that notwithstanding *The Nation's* comments, Macy's action was taken as a result of merchandising considerations only and in no way reflects the opinion of any pressure group.

F. R. CARMINES, Manager,
Adjustment Service Department,
Macy's, New York

New York, October 6

["American Freedom and Catholic Power" by Paul Blanshard is now in its eighth printing and over 50,000

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copies have been sold to date. We would, therefore, put to Mr. Carmines only the question raised earlier in these pages: What are the "merchandising considerations" that induce a bookseller to take a best-seller off the counter? We also wonder about a full-page Macy's advertisement which appeared in the New York *Herald Tribune* two weeks ago. "The best-sellers . . ." it announced, "by the leading authors . . . from the leading publishers . . . always at Macy's." *Nearly* always at Macy's, that is, except when you have to write a special letter for a special book on "special order."—EDITORS THE NATION.]

Roots of a Policy

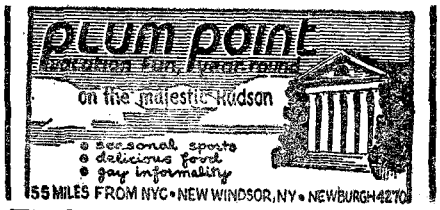
Dear Sirs: I was very much interested in the article Australia—for Whites Only by Ernest O. Ames in your issue of September 17. The White Australia policy, while not yet a written law, is similar to your Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 in that it was formulated at least partially on the basis of the argument from trade unions that Polynesian and Asiatic immigrants would lower the living standard of the Australian workers. In actual fact, of course, any lowering of the standard was attributable not to the imported workers but to their employers, who paid them fantastically low wages and kept them in virtual slavery in the earlier days of Australia's history.

Today, under the Labor government, the same policy has been used against Asiatic workers who were prepared to take the lead in organizing their fellows into trade unions so that their working conditions might approximate those of white workers in Australia. Samsudin Bin Katib, a former Sumatran volunteer non-commissioned officer in the Z-Force Commandos of the Australian army, and "Johnnie" Pattiasina, an Amboinese ex-member of the Dutch navy and former prisoner of the Japanese, were forcibly "repatriated" from Australia for trying to better the conditions of indentured workers—yes, we still have them!—in the pearl-shell industry in the northwest coastal areas.

Details of their cases are contained in a pamphlet by Eric and Elizabeth Marshall of the East-West Committee of Australia. It is called "Asia, the White Australia Policy, and You," and is obtainable from the committee at 167 Collins Street, Melbourne, C. 1, for the price of two international reply coupons.

J. F. CAIRNS, President,
East-West Committee of Australia
Melbourne, Australia, October 1

RESORTS



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